



GISCHLER
BALDEÓN
MOSSA

THESE
ARE THE

**SPIRITS
OF
VENGEANCE?**

PATHETIC.



For eons, the scales balancing the supernatural realms have held steady...until now. Only the strangest of alliances can save Heaven and Hell...a union of disparate heroes, counteracting the sins of mortals as...

SPIRITS OF VENGEANCE

At the dawn of time, Heaven and Hell forged a pact known as the Covenant. Although the two sides were at war, every thousand years a ceasefire would occur where the rules of engagement were renegotiated. Thus, the balance between Heaven and Hell has been maintained to this day.

After being handed a silver bullet by a dying angel, Johnny Blaze (A.K.A. Ghost Rider) turned to Daimon Hellstrom for answers. Unbeknownst to them, the silver bullet was the property of a sorcerer named Necrodamus, who is desperate to reclaim the enchanted metal. His lieutenant, Razan the Night Jackal, was entrusted to recover the silver and prevent knowledge of their existence from spreading by any means necessary...

They placed a bounty on Johnny's head, putting demons of all kinds on the hunt for Blaze and the silver. Without the missing silver, Ragnar the Dark Dwarf cannot forge the ultimate weapon: one capable of killing an angel for good...

WAR AT THE GATES OF HELL

PART III

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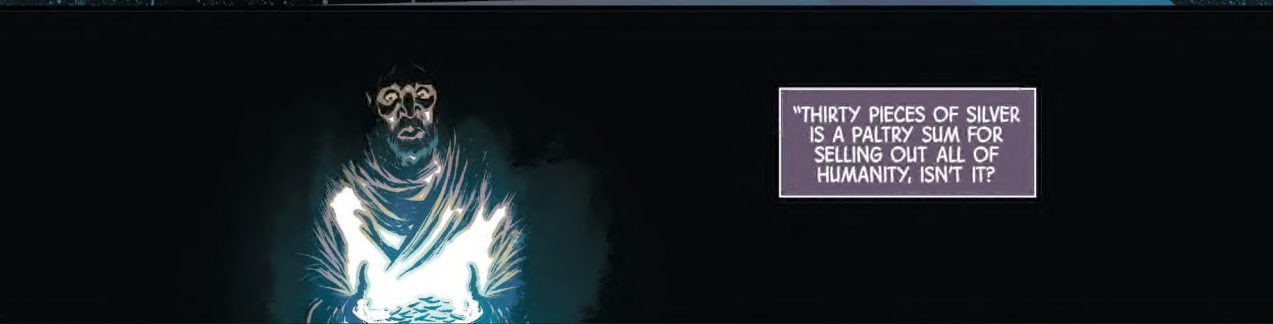
PRESIDENT

ALAN FINE


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"WE ALL KNOW
THE STORY. THE
BETRAYAL. THE
JUDAS KISS."



"THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER
IS A PALTRY SUM FOR
SELLING OUT ALL OF
HUMANITY, ISN'T IT?"



"I MEAN, REALLY?
THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER?
IT'S NOTHING. A TRIFLE."


"OF COURSE, JUDAS ISCARIOT
HAD OTHER *MOTIVATIONS*
FOR HIS FOUL DEED."



"AND ANYWAY,
YOU CAN'T *BUY*
FORGIVENESS."




"RAVAGED BY ANGER,
CONFUSION AND *GUILT*...
WELL, COULD ANYONE
BLAME HIM FOR
WHAT HE DID NEXT?




"IT WAS FATE...AND MY GOOD FORTUNE...
THAT *MATTHIAS* WAS THE ONE TO FIND
HIM. HE WOULD LATER BE PICKED TO
REPLACE JUDAS AS THE *TWELFTH* APOSTLE.

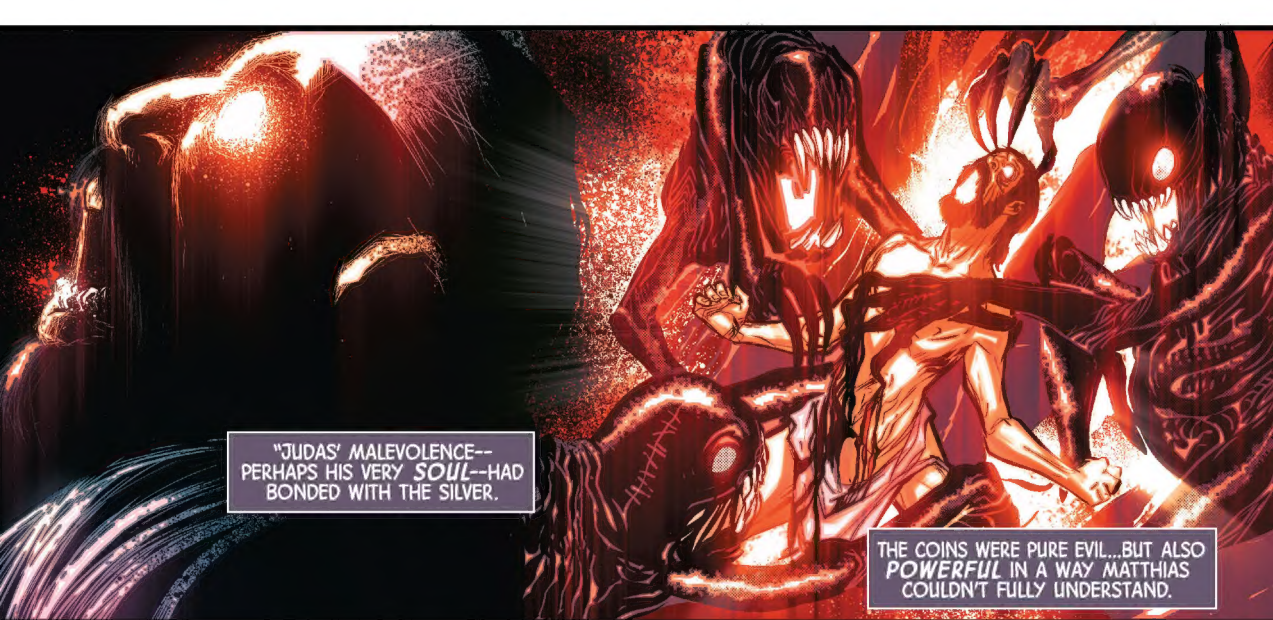
"THE *GOSPEL OF MATTHIAS*
WAS THOUGHT TO BE LOST. I FOUND
IT. IT TOOK HUNDREDS OF HOURS OF
PORING OVER ANCIENT HEBREW SCROLLS
IN DISTANT CRYPTS, BUT I FOUND IT.



"PERHAPS MATTHIAS HAD BEEN
GIFTED WITH SPECIAL VISION. OR
MAYBE IT WAS SIMPLY THE
CURSED NATURE OF THE COINS.



"BUT IN
THAT MOMENT,
MATTHIAS *KNEW*.

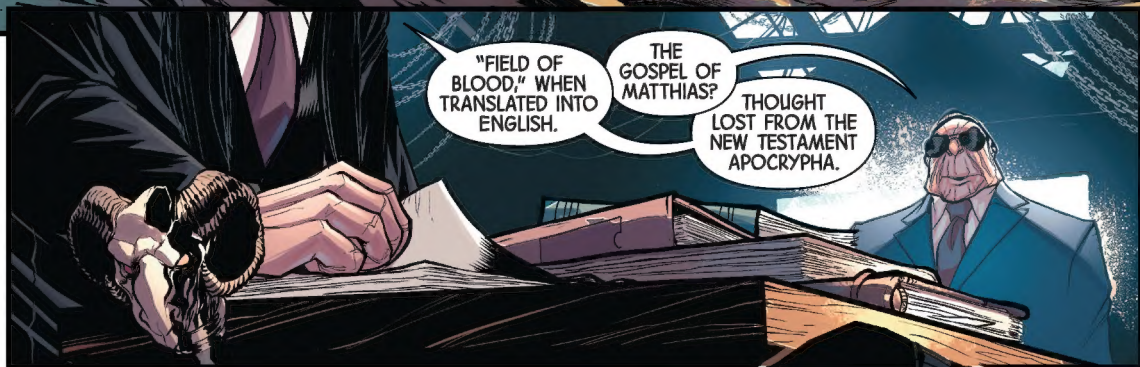


"JUDAS' MALEVOLENCE--
PERHAPS HIS VERY *SOUL*--HAD
BONDED WITH THE SILVER.

THE COINS WERE PURE EVIL...BUT ALSO
POWERFUL IN A WAY MATTHIAS
COULDN'T FULLY UNDERSTAND.



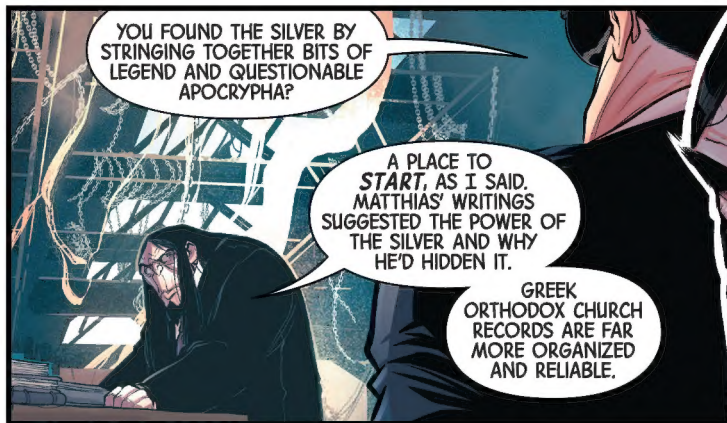
"BUT WHAT HE *DID* KNOW WAS THAT THE
SILVER WAS *BLOOD MONEY* AND SHOULD
BE AS BURIED AS JUDAS HIMSELF. THUS THE
POTTER'S FIELD WAS NAMED *AKELDAMA*."



"FIELD OF
BLOOD!" WHEN
TRANSLATED INTO
ENGLISH.

THE
GOSPEL OF
MATTHIAS?

THOUGHT
LOST FROM THE
NEW TESTAMENT
APOCRYPHA.



YOU FOUND THE SILVER BY
STRINGING TOGETHER BITS OF
LEGEND AND QUESTIONABLE
APOCRYPHA?

A PLACE TO
START, AS I SAID.
MATTHIAS' WRITINGS
SUGGESTED THE POWER OF
THE SILVER AND WHY
HE'D HIDDEN IT.

GREEK
ORTHODOX CHURCH
RECORDS ARE FAR
MORE ORGANIZED
AND RELIABLE.



AND IN
1892, THEY BUILT
A *MONASTERY*
AT AKELDAMA.

"I'M SURE YOU CAN
GUESS WHAT THEY
UNEARTHED THERE WHEN
CONSTRUCTION BEGAN.

"THEY FOUND JUDAS' BODY
AND THE SILVER, YES, BUT
ALSO SOMETHING *MORE*--

"--THE *WARNING* LEFT
BY SAINT MATTHIAS.

"AND BEING
TRUE BELIEVERS,
THEY *HEEDED*
THAT WARNING.

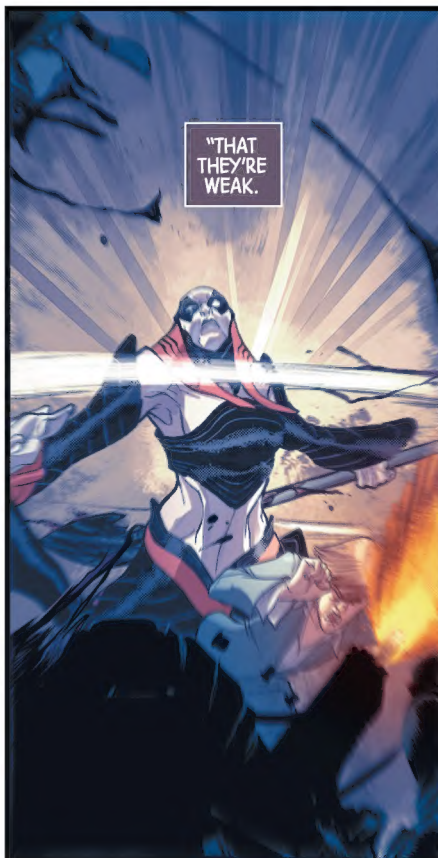
KLAK

"AND SO THE SILVER
WAS SEALED AWAY...

"...TO BE GUARDED
FOR DECADES BY
MERE HUMAN BEINGS.



"BUT JUDAS ACTUALLY
TAUGHT ME A
VALUABLE LESSON
ABOUT HUMAN BEINGS.



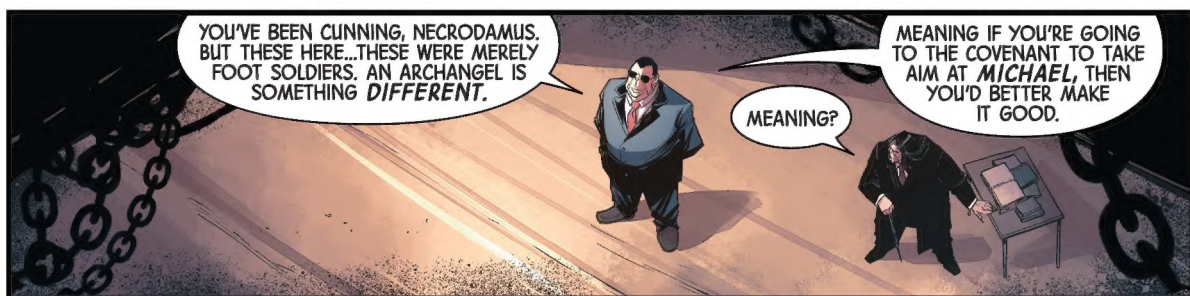
"THAT
THEY'RE
WEAK.



"CORRUPTIBLE.



"MORE CHEAPLY PURCHASED
THAN I'D EVER HAVE IMAGINED."



YOU'VE BEEN CUNNING, NECRODAMUS.
BUT THESE HERE...THESE WERE MERELY
FOOT SOLDIERS. AN ARCHANGEL IS
SOMETHING *DIFFERENT*.

MEANING?

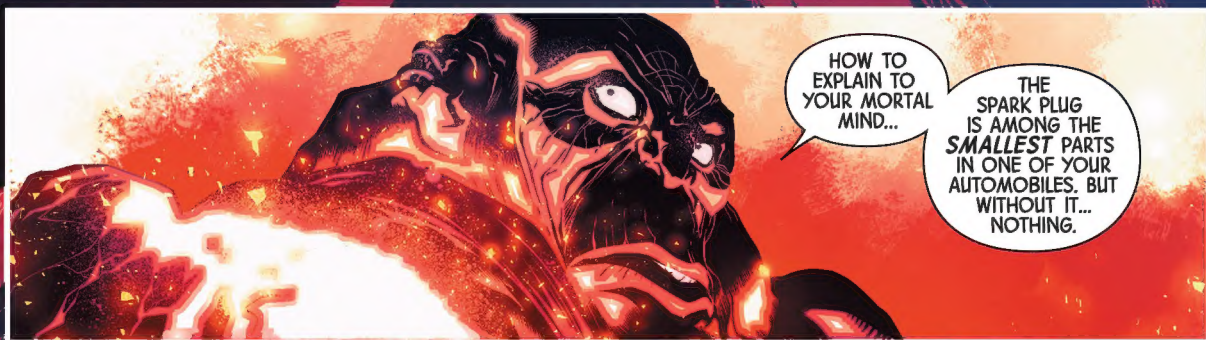
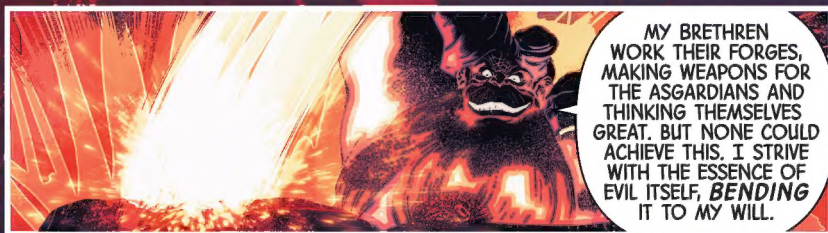
MEANING IF YOU'RE GOING
TO THE COVENANT TO TAKE
AIM AT *MICHAEL*, THEN
YOU'D BETTER MAKE
IT GOOD.



BECAUSE
YOU'LL ONLY
GET ONE
SHOT.

POPOCATÉPETL VOLCANO, MEXICO.

"YOU **WORRY** TOO
MUCH, NECRODAMUS."



SOMEWHERE IN MANHATTAN...

CALM DOWN, EDWIN, AND EXPLAIN WHY YOU SENT WORD TO MEET HERE.

LAST TIME WE SPOKE, YOU WERE OFF TO FIND A PLACE TO LIE LOW.

NO PLACE IS SAFE, HELLSTROM. I DIDN'T KNOW IT WOULD GET SO BAD SO SOON. THIS ROOF GARDEN IS ONE OF THE **REALLY OLD PLACES**. NOT MANY KNOW ABOUT IT, BUT I KNEW **YOU** WOULD.

SO WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?

YOU'VE GOT TO **HIDE ME**, HELLSTROM.

THINGS HAVE GONE SOUTH SINCE YOU CAME AROUND ASKING DANGEROUS QUESTIONS. AGNES IS **DEAD**. AND THAT GROTESQUE FRIEND OF YOURS, CURTIS, IS MISSING. CROSSING PATHS WITH YOU IS THE KISS OF DEATH, AND **I'M NEXT**.

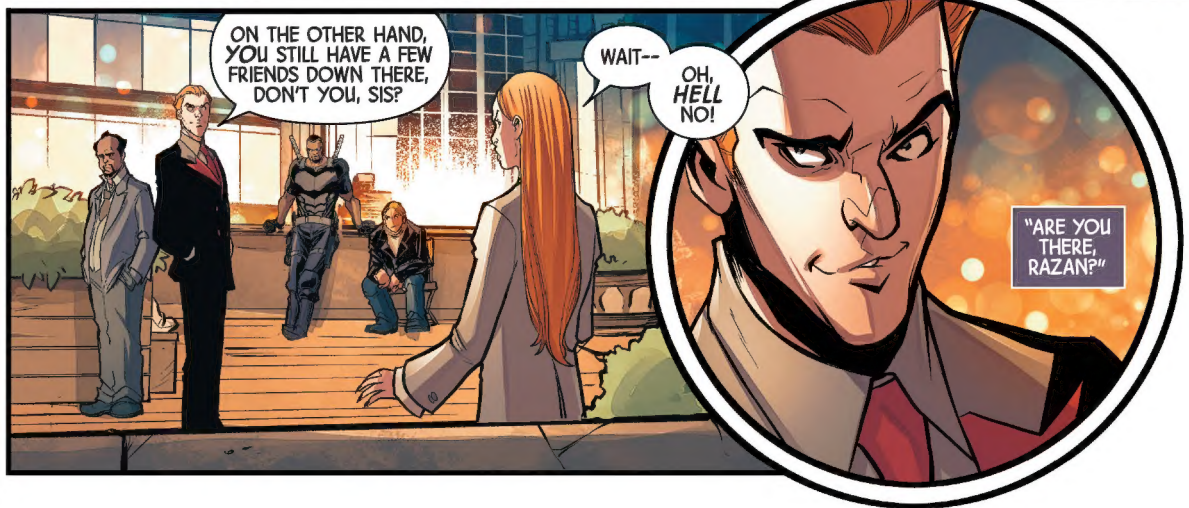
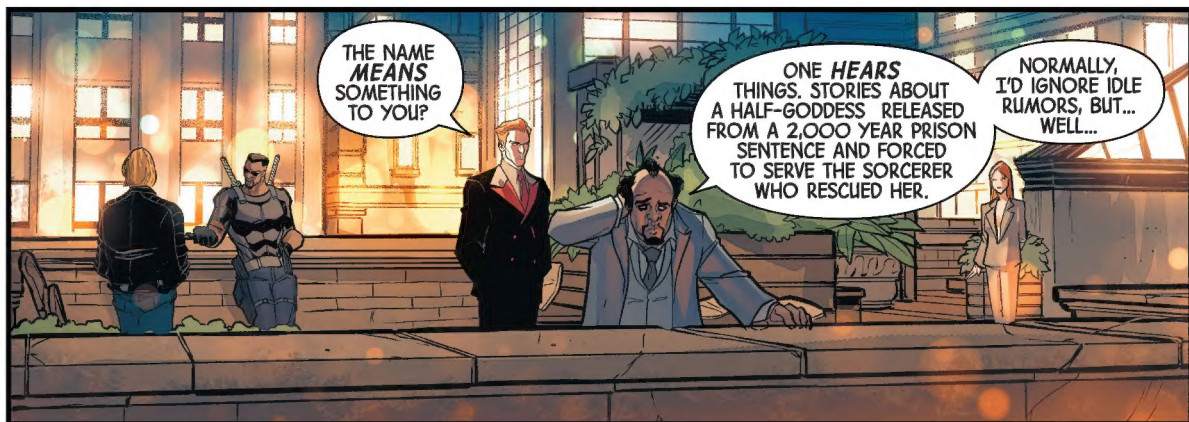
HELP ME HELP YOU, EDWIN.


ANYTHING YOU CAN TELL US ABOUT THE ONES WHO ARE AFTER YOU WILL HELP US GET TO **THEM** FIRST.

I...I JUST DON'T KNOW.

WHAT ABOUT THE LADY THE BOOKSTORE DUDE TOLD US ABOUT? WHAT WAS HER NAME? **RAZAN**.

THE NIGHT JACKAL?!





I HEAR
YOU, LORD
NECRODAMUS.

HAVE YOU
RETRIEVED MY
PROPERTY?

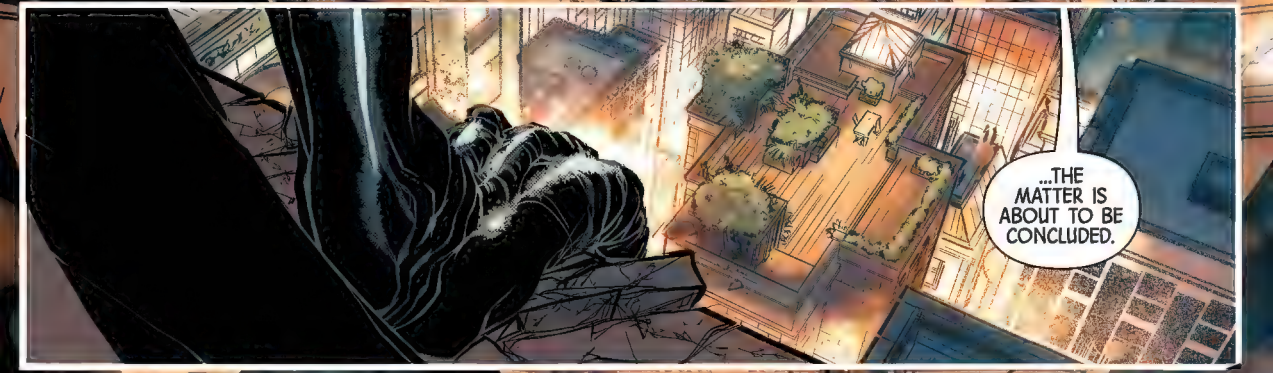
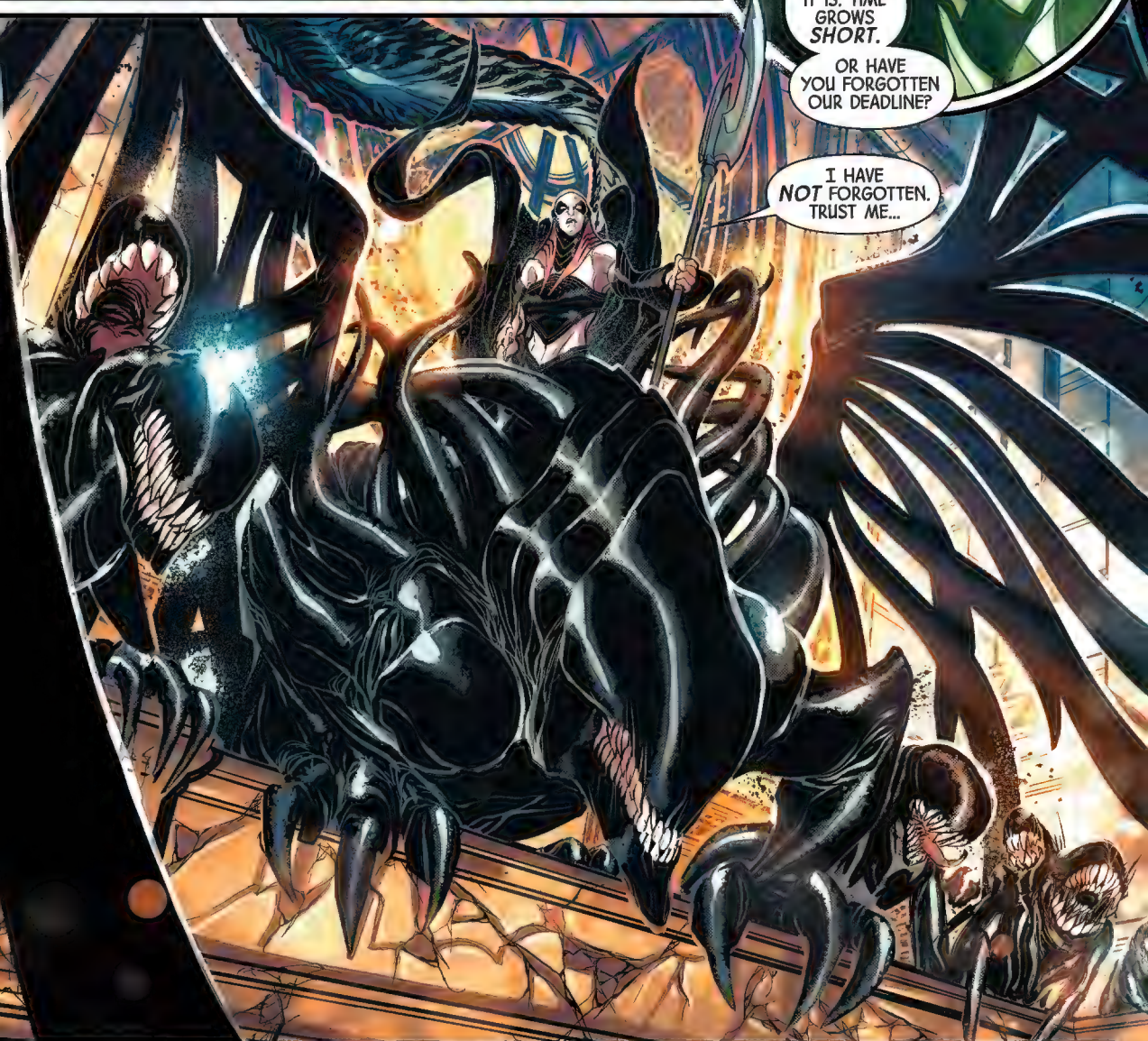
SOON. I
CHOSE TO USE
ONE OF THOSE
MARKED FOR DEATH
AS BAIT. IT WAS
A GOOD RISK.



I HOPE
IT IS. TIME
GROWS
SHORT.

OR HAVE
YOU FORGOTTEN
OUR DEADLINE?

I HAVE
NOT FORGOTTEN.
TRUST ME...



...THE
MATTER IS
ABOUT TO BE
CONCLUDED.

IF THERE'S USEFUL INFORMATION IN PORT BRIMSTONE, BLADE AND MY SISTER WILL FIND IT.

IN THE MEANTIME, HAVE A LOOK AT THIS.

ANYTHING YOU MIGHT KNOW WOULD HELP.

I'M SORRY, HELLSTROM...

...I DON'T KNOW ANY MORE THAN ANYONE ELSE...

...AND I'M TERRIFIED THAT SOMETHING LIKE THAT SHOULD BE UNEARTHED AFTER BEING LOST FOR SO LONG.

BUT IT CAN'T BE A COINCIDENCE THAT SO CLOSE TO THE COVENANT--

OH...

...HELL.

KA
KA
KA
KA

THE SILVER!

TNG TNG TNG TNG





SSSSWWWW • OOOOSH

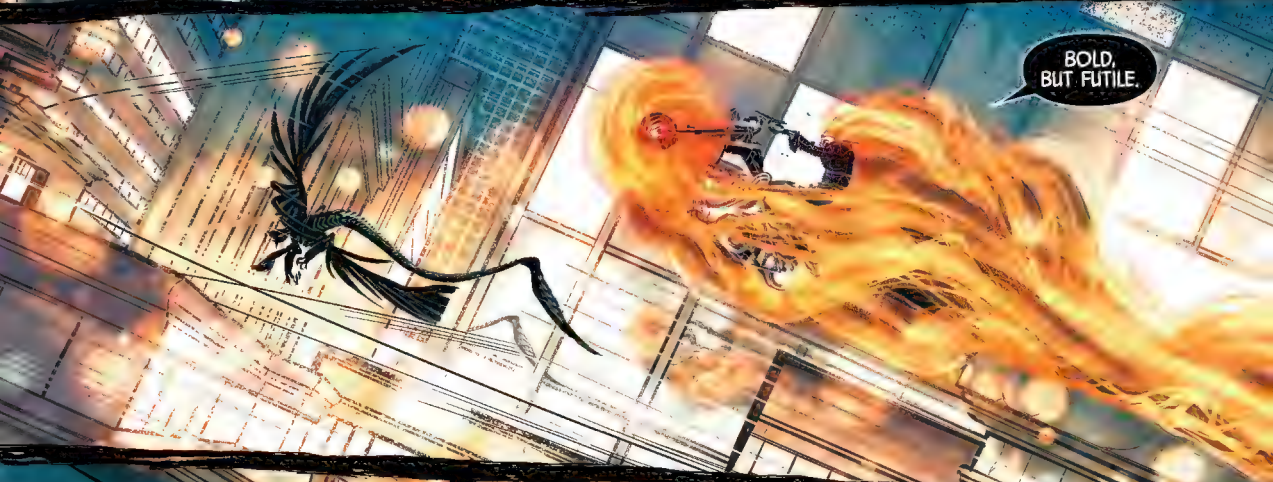


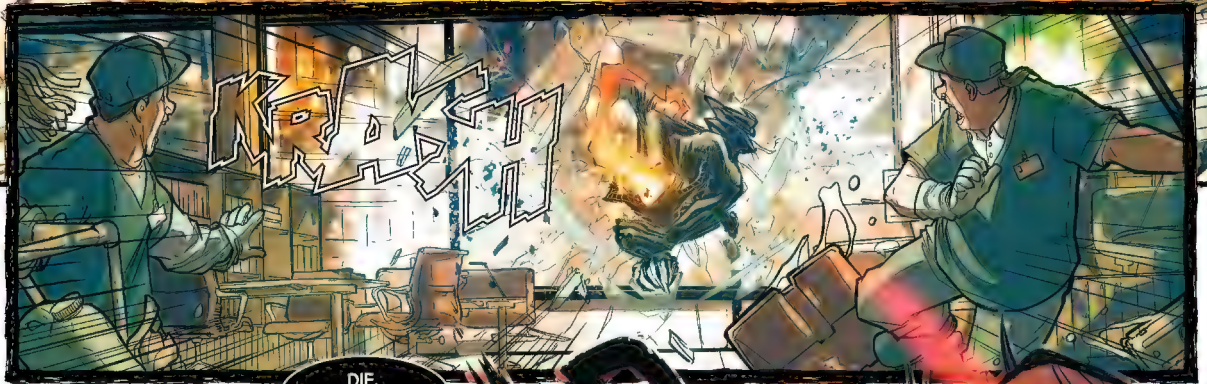
SHE'S GOT THE BULLET!



WHAP

SHE'S MINE.







ABOUT AS FAR BELOW MANHATTAN AS YOU CAN GET. AWAY FROM THE PRYING EYES OF CIVILIANS. THE LOCALS SORT OF...LET IT ALL HANG OUT.

TAKE US OVER HERE.



SATANA. BEEN A WHILE.

HOW'S THE WORLD'S UGLIEST DOORMAN, TARGUS?

BETTER IF YOU TELL ME YOU DIDN'T BRING YOUR BROTHER.

NOT THIS TIME.

YOU SHOULD STILL WATCH YOUR BACK. PLENTY OF FOLKS WOULD THINK IT CLOSE ENOUGH TO TAKE A SHOT AT YOU.



WE DON'T WANT TROUBLE. NOT NOW.

I'LL TRY NOT TO BREAK ANYTHING.



PORT BRIMSTONE. IT MIGHT BE UGLY... BUT AT LEAST IT SMELLS BAD.



SO WHERE ARE THESE FRIENDS OF YOURS?

IF YOU DEFINE "FRIEND" AS SOMEONE WHO WON'T TRY TO MURDER ME ON SIGHT...

"...THEN THE GOAT'S HEAD MIGHT BE A PLACE TO START."



GEEZ, SATANA. PLEASE TELL ME DAIMON ISN'T WITH YOU.

DAMN. WHAT DID HE DO?



YEAH, LONG STORY.

PERRY, WE'RE LOOKING FOR SOME INFORMATION.

I DON'T KNOW NOTHING ABOUT IT.

I HAVEN'T EVEN ASKED--

DON'T CARE. EVEN IF I KNEW SOMETHING, I KNOW NOTHING. THINGS HAVE BEEN WEIRD LATELY. TENSE.

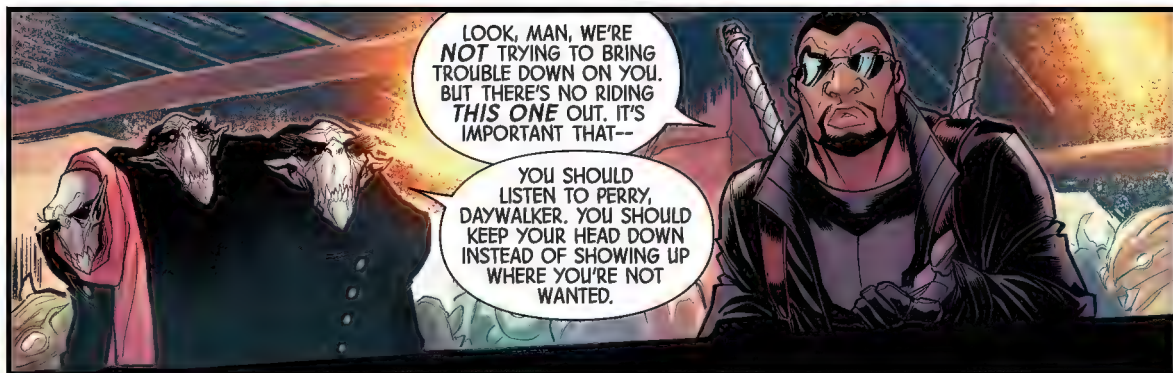


PLACE HAS BEEN FILLING UP WITH PEOPLE LOOKING TO LIE LOW.

BUT A LOT OF PEOPLE HAVE BEEN LEAVING TOO--HARDCORE TYPES HEADING WEST.

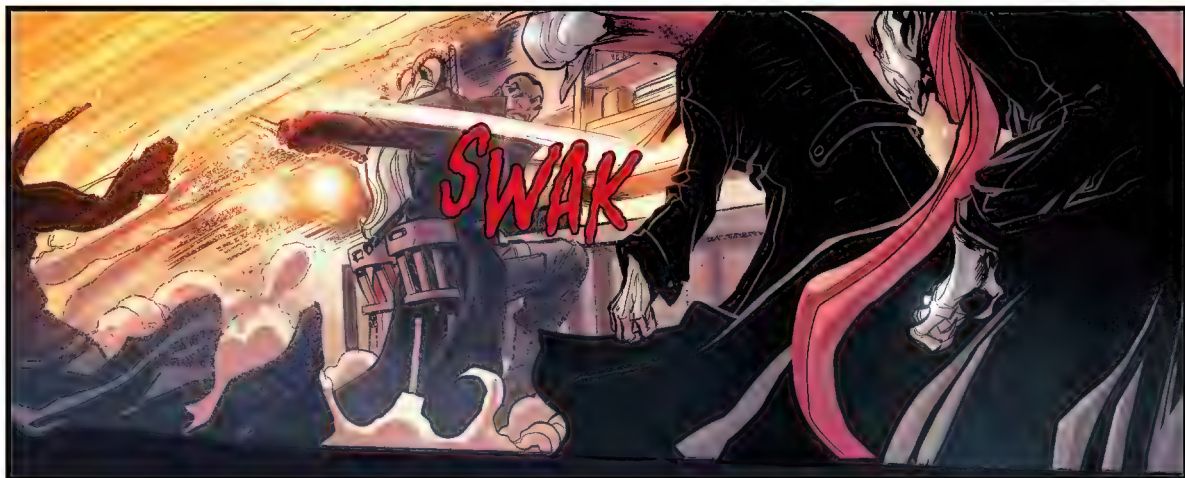
SOMETHING BIG GOING DOWN. SOMETHING BAD.

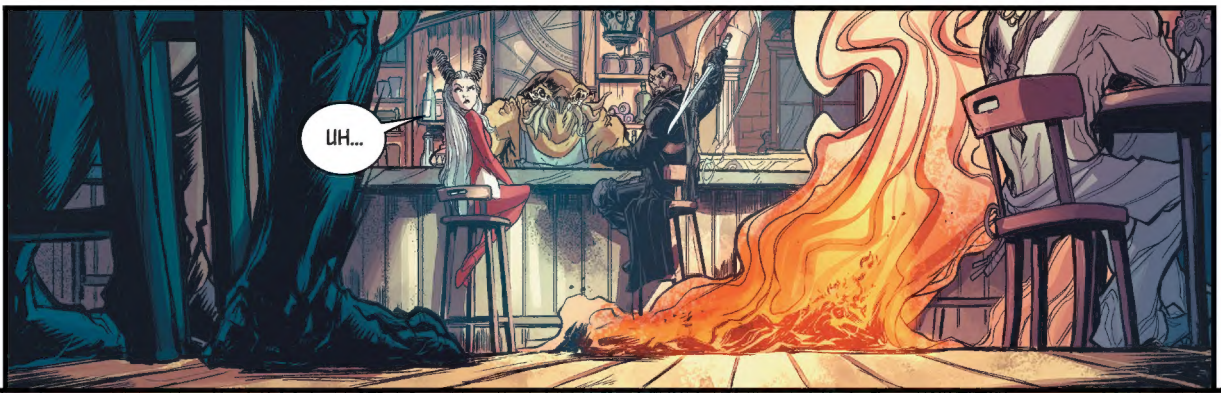
I'M GOING TO KEEP MY HEAD DOWN AND RIDE THIS OUT.



LOOK, MAN, WE'RE NOT TRYING TO BRING TROUBLE DOWN ON YOU. BUT THERE'S NO RIDING THIS ONE OUT. IT'S IMPORTANT THAT--

YOU SHOULD LISTEN TO PERRY, DAYWALKER. YOU SHOULD KEEP YOUR HEAD DOWN INSTEAD OF SHOWING UP WHERE YOU'RE NOT WANTED.





UH...



OKAY, SHOW'S OVER, PEOPLE. PERSONAL DISPUTE. GO BACK TO WHAT YOU WERE DOING.



NOW, BEFORE WE WERE SO RUDELY INTERRUPTED, I BELIEVE YOU WERE GOING TO OFFER SOME HELPFUL INFORMATION?

NO, WE WERE ENDING A CONVERSATION. HERE, HAVE A DRINK.

THOSE GLASSES ARE EMPTY.



BOTTLE'S IN THERE.

OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND, PERRY?

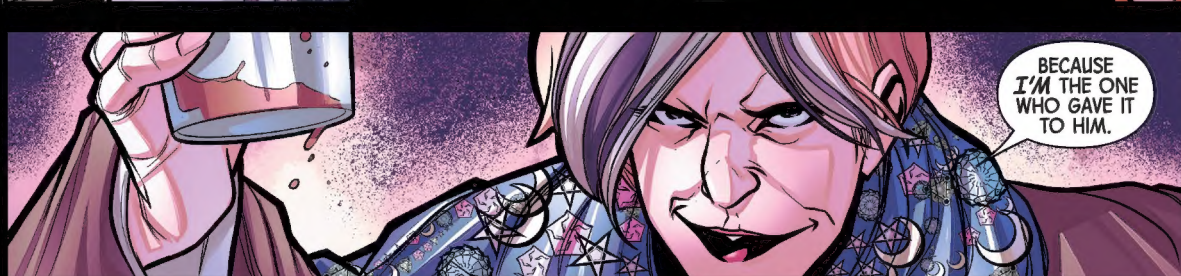
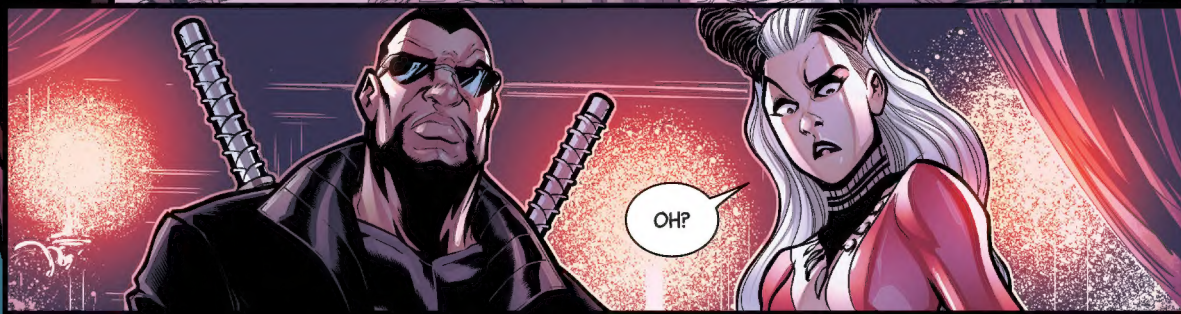
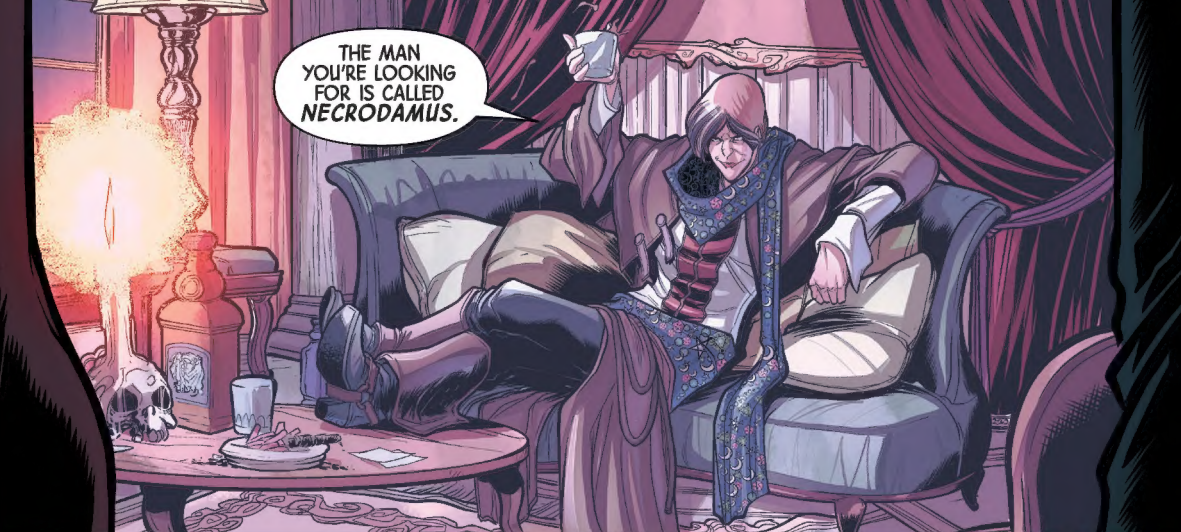
PERSON BUYING THE BOOZE WANTS PRIVACY.

NOTHING TO DO WITH ME.



KREEAAK

HELLO?

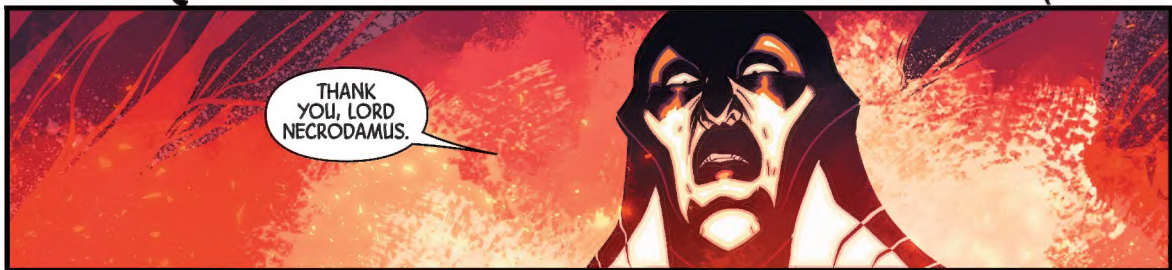




YOU'VE
DONE WELL,
RAZAN.

YOU'VE
REDEEMED
YOURSELF FOR LOSING
THE SILVER IN THE FIRST
PLACE. I FORGIVE
YOU.

KLANG KLANG KLANG KLANG



THANK
YOU, LORD
NECRODAMUS.



WELL? IS
IT READY?
TELL ME!

YES. IT'S
COOL NOW.
COME SEE.

Sssssssssss



SO...
BEAUTIFUL...

LET
THE WORLD
QUAKE AT THE
COMING OF...



THE
ARCHANGEL
KILLER!

TO BE CONTINUED...



NEXT ISSUE



WAR AT THE GATES OF HELL CONTINUES...